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Trump suggests Mexico isn't a US ally and accuses the country of killing thousands of Americans in an interview with Fox's Laura Ingraham

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President Donald Trump suggested in a Thursday interview on Fox News that Mexico isn't a United States ally, despite the fact that it's the US's largest trading partner.

When Fox News host Laura Ingraham said Mexico is an "important" US ally, Trump paused and asked, "How do you define ally?"

Ingraham pointed out that Mexico is one of the US's largest trading partners, to which Trump responded, "OK, fine," before accusing Mexico of sending "\$500 billion worth of drugs" to the US, killing "100,000 people" and "ruin[ing] one million families" every year.

"That's really an invasion without the guns," he said.

Research on illegal immigration paints a different picture.

According to the Associated Press, the Cato Institute, and other studies found that people who enter the US illegally are less likely to commit crime than US citizens. Legal immigrants are even less likely to do so.

The AP also reported that a March study by the journal Criminology found "undocumented immigration does not increase violence."

Trump's claim that Mexico is sending "\$500 billion worth of drugs" to the US is also misleading.

Drugs brought into the US have had an estimated economic cost of \$500 billion, but not all of them came in through Mexico, and most are smuggled through legal ports of entry.

Twitter Ads info and privacy Trump's comments questioning Mexico's status as a critical US ally come after he announced a controversial plan to hike tariffs on all Mexican imports in an effort to force the country to reduce the flow of migrants across the southern border. The president has long blamed the country for the thousands of Central and South American asylum seekers and migrants who've traveled through Mexico to cross into the US.

Trump said he isn't worried his actions could jeopardize the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, which would replace NAFTA if passed.

"I'm not worried about it because they need us, we don't need them," Trump said.

But statistics show that a 5% tariff on Mexican goods could cost around 400,000 US jobs, according to a recent analysis by The Perryman Group, an economic consulting firm.

The US retail sector would likely bear most of the economic burden. Texas and California could be hit particularly hard because both states' economies are linked to Mexico's.

US and Mexican officials are negotiating an immigration deal to ward off Trump's tariff threat and a potential fracture with Senate Republicans, many of whom have signaled a willingness to block Trump's measure.

But time is running short, because Trump faces a Friday deadline to sign an executive order for the tariffs to go into effect on Monday, June 10.